CHAPTER III

AN EXPOSITION OF SARTRE'S LATER WORK-CRITIQUE OF DIALECTICAL REASON
In the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* Sartre takes the Ontology of *Being and Nothingness* and uses it to create a theory of history. In this chapter we will only give an exposition of Sartre’s view as projected in his book *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. It’s a development from his earlier book ‘*Being and Nothingness*’ where he claims a compromise between both Existentialism and Marxism. We in this chapter will try to bring out the similarities and differences between Sartre and Marx and wherever there is a relevance we will given an account of Marxist position.

“Since 1947 Sartre’s major writings have been political essays directly related to the contemporary scene. Whether writing about [ French ] Indo china, American politics, or the Negro problem, he has never denied that for him the only possible system of analysis and line of conduct in the field of action is the Marxist. But the point of departure of historical materialism is not the same as those of Sartre’s original philosophy. Marxism takes as its prime datum the biological and social condition of man, whose consciousness is but a ‘superstructure’.”

---

In *Being and Nothingness* Sartre started as did the ancient “idealists” (though he stated the problem differently) from the interiority of consciousness. Marxism starts from something external to consciousness—the biological and social datum of the human collectivity and its class structure. There is therefore a rigid philosophical opposition between the Marxist system and Sartre. Far from concealing this opposition, Sartre still acknowledge it, even after fifteen years of apprenticeship.

As Sartre takes the ontology of *Being and Nothingness* to create a theory of history, so in order to accomplish this task Sartre realizes the need for a new method of inquiry. In the introduction of the *Critique* \(^2\) titled Search for a Method, he outlines a methodology which combines both analysis and synthesis. Sartre holds that the aim of the Critique is to explore the possibility of a ‘social and historical anthropology’ and to determine the limits of Marxism as a dialectical mode of thought and free it from dogma. The first part of the introductory section Search for a Method is called ‘Marxism and Existentialism’. He in the first part outlined Existentialism’s relationship with Marxism. Sartre thinks that a correct interpretation of a world view requires taking into consideration some aspect of Marxist methodology.

Sartre claims his kinship with Marx and considers Marxism as the philosophy of present era and his Existentialism as an ideology that has developed

---

\( ^2 \) From now onward we will be using the above expression of *Critique* instead of the full title *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. 

123
at the ‘margin of Marxism and not against it’. Earlier in Being and Nothingness Sartre had a point of difference between his own idea and that of Marx on the question of man’s individuality. But in Existentialism and Humanism, he agrees with Marx on the question of viewing philosophy as a weapon of social revolution. As the time passed he moved closer to Marxism and in Question of Method, he praises Marx for working out the true perspective of man as an individual. In the Critique though Sartre accepts within his own frame work of existentialism, Marx’s concept of Historical Materialism, he rejects Marx’s Dialectical Materialism and theory of knowledge. Sartre states in this context “we were at the same time convinced that historical materialism provided the only valid interpretation of history, and that existentialism constituted the only concrete approach to reality.” The phrase “at the same time” (the italics are Sartre’s) shows the dilemma which he faced for years: convinced that he was right in his analysis of man’s situation and that the communists were right in their analysis of history, he was tormented by the fact that the Marxist interpretation of history was grounded on a principle which he could not accept. In the, preface of his criticism of Dialectical Reasoning (first published in 1957 as Question of Method) he affirms without tergiversation that in its present form communism has become a sterile, compulsory doctrine, that though neglected even its foundation head remains obstructed. Sartre’s objective as he claims in the Critique is to ‘raise one question, and only one: “do we now possess the materials for constituting a

structural, historical anthropology?" - To ask, "whether there is any such thing as a truth of humanity?"5

The *Critique* in Kantian sense is determining the nature, conditions, and limits of this form of reason. We thus find that there is a major ontological difference between Sartre's professed objective in the earlier and later work. It is the difference between the two types of objectives, which is being reflected in the question, which Sartre raises in the Critique.

We find that where as in *Being and Nothingness*, it is only confined to personal and intimate experiences of an individual which Sartre designates as an existentialist situation, in *Critique* his attempt is to make a synthesis of Existentialism and Marxism. Most of his examples, to explain his position are taken from the socio-political situations. And they reflect his concept of man and its relationship to that of society. In *Being and Nothingness* we have already seen, that his concept of man is based upon an isolated and alienated individual, where as in *Critique* Sartre, because of his acceptance of Marx's historical materialism takes man as an integral part of the society.

If a structural, historical anthropology is possible, the dialectic will be its principle of intelligibility that is, any truth and humanity will be dialectical. This in Sartre's View associates the understanding with Marxism both as a logical form

---

4. Ibid., p. 822.
5. Ibid., p. 822.
by which to approach human reality; and as the substance of that reality. We find that Marx has derived the dialectic from Hegel, re-located it in the material world, and have used it to explain human history. Sartre’s professed goal, building on the actual theoretical and practical achievements of Marxism and attempting to overcome its current impasses, is to lay a philosophical basis for his dialectic. A structural historical anthropology, according to Sartre demands to know the being of human reality. However there is no way to determine ‘human essence’, or ‘human nature’. Sartre, as in conformity with his existentialist position expounded in *Being and Nothingness* holds in the *Critique* that there is no human essence. As opposed to Marx in Sartre’s view the dialectic emerges from, and is itself, human activity. From the very outset the *Critique* maintains a sharp distinction between dialectical reason and analytical reason. The dialectic is the only adequate means, Sartre insists, of understanding human reality, from the practical activity of a single individual to the vast course of world history. Furthermore we do not submit to the dialectic, as a reading of Stalin’s *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* might lead us to believe: “if there is a dialectic it is no more than ourselves.” Sartre distinguishes his dialectical methodology from that of Stalin.

Stalin in his book *Dialectical and Historical Materialism* distinguishes between his materialism and his dialectic and holds that where as the nature of the world is material and the method that he applies is dialectic and thus is

---

6. Ibid., p. 39.
distinguished in Stalin’s view, between the ontological and the epistemological positions. Moreover Stalin does not recognize negation of negation as an important component of dialectics. The shortcomings regarding negation of negation of ‘Stalin-dialectic’ is overcome by Sartre.

Ronald Aronson interprets Sartre’s dialectic as “It is our practical activity, as praxis, that totalizes the world around us, projects a goal on the basis of what has already been achieved, and transcends the practical field towards New World.”

Thus, in Seeking to establish the ‘validity and limits’ of dialectical reason as the logic of human praxis, Sartre acts as Marxism’s Kant. Sartre’s objective was to reconcile his concept of Existentialism with that of Marxism. Sartre while attempting to reconcile Marxism with that of existentialism had the atheistic form of existentialism in mind because he holds that there can be no compromise between theistic form of existentialism and Marxism. He holds that the project of reconciliation between existentialism and Marxism in Critique is meant to overcome the shortcomings of both his earlier form of existentialism as propounded in Being and Nothingness and those of Marxism. He thinks that his earlier version of existentialism lacked social content which he claims to incorporate from Marxism and Marxism in his view lacked the individuals existentialist situation to which can be compensated, he thinks, by synthesizing it

---

(Marxism) with existentialism. We later on in our fourth chapter will discuss the issue of whether the compromise between existentialism and Marxism, which Sartre advocates, is possible or not.

Alan Sheridan Smith in the introduction of *Critique* states, “he (Sartre) had somewhat one sidedly initiated this philosophical project in 1946 with Materialism and revolution and carried it further with the 1952-54 essay on the communist Party. The Object of these writings, Philosophically speaking, was to locate subjectivity within history in general and the revolutionary project in particular: to establish the centrality of creative human activity, first against Marxism and offering Existentialism as a substitute, but as Sartre developed and deepened his understanding of Marxism, he came to accept it as the untranscendable Philosophy of our time, and to regard existentialism as a still necessary ideology within it.”

The essay Materialism and Revolutions contains a link between Sartre’s early Philosophy and his political thoughts, particularly his attitude towards Marxism and communism. Here Sartre subscribes to the Philosophy of Proletariat and upholds the aspiration of the working class and the idea of revolution. But this he does, according to his own assessment, in the light of his concept about freedom and contingency as worked out in his earlier work (that is, in the light of his indefatigable faith in Cartesian dualism between matter and consciousness and his adherence to the idealistic subjectivism and the ‘notion

---

of individual freedom). Thus he intends not to reject Marxism in the name of a third path or of an idealist humanism, but to reconquer man within Marxism, not to abandon his focus on subjectivity or individual experience and human activity in general but within a social and historical framework.

Thus Sartre poses a new classical question of social theory; how can we understand both concrete individual and the social world to which they belong? And can we understand each in terms of the other? That is, in Sartre’s terms, how do separate individual acts, combine to produce a constituted social world?

In order to grasp Sartre’s later project in the Critique, which is meant to compromise subjectivity of the individual as interpreted by existentialism, with the objectivity of Marxism viewed from the social angle, we need to state here their differences, the distinction between the basic premises of Sartre and Marxism. Taking Sartre first the basic premises of Sartre’s existentialism which is common between both his works, is the Cartesian cogito understood as pure consciousness for which in Sartrean view, all epistemology is to be derived: Though Sartre says that consciousness is always the consciousness of the object yet consciousness does not originate or is influenced by the objective reality. And Sartre’s individual is considered not as a biologico, socio-historical concrete being but as a separate unit of pure consciousness. Thus Sartre conceives the society as an organization of separate individuals who constitute for him both the subject of knowledge as well
Taking Marxist view we find that for Marx individual is conceived as a biologico, socio, historico, conscious, concrete being. And consciousness in view of Marxism is itself a development arising out of an interaction between man and man and man and nature. Thus the basic foundational premise of Marx is the social being who interacts both with other human being and with nature. Thus the history for Marxism is the history of the development of the individual who influences and is influenced by the social reality, and it is this social reality which every individual inherits from the past. On the basis of this ‘He’ (individual) through his social activity craves his future.

Because of these differences in the basic premises, we find, that Sartre’s attempt to reconcile between existentialism and Marxism as a synthesis which is a form of world outlook, cannot it seems to us successful. A more elaborate discussion between Sartre’s later work and Marxism, will be taken up in the next chapter.

Sartre outlines a methodology, which combines both analysis and synthesis. He calls it the “regressive-progressive” method. The regressive method he designates as “dialectical reason”. It is a method that will not only make possible the elucidation of the fundamental project of historical man but will make history
intelligible. When carried to its limits, he claims, it will reveal the "truth of history". The sense of the history as used by Sartre is different from the sense of history used by Marx, which we will discuss in the next chapter.

The first volume of the Critique is a regressive-analytical study that reconstructs history and attempts to explain its various structures, chief of which is the Series, Group, Institution, Praxis, Practico-inert, the Group-in-Fusion, the Sovereign and Social Classes. It is true that man can not live in Isolation. Social reality is a fact. Nature of man can only be understood in relation to other beings. One of the basic characteristics of man, which distinguishes it from other being, is that. 'Man is a tool making being. He does not make for himself alone but for others too. This tool making being is understood in terms of his social grouping'. History states that man has always lived in collectives. Later on this social setup became more complex and necessitated division of labour. The product, which is produced out of these groups, will be a social product, which will be an practico-inert for Sartre.

What is important here is to see the nature of these grouping (or ensembles). "Series is an ensemble of whose members is determined in alterity by others (in contrast to group)."9 "Group is ensemble each of whose members is determined by others in reciprocity (in contrast to series)."10 "Institution is a group which developed from a pledged group through the classification of its structures

---

10. Ibid., p - 828.
and the emergence of sovereignty and seriality within it.\footnote{Ibid., p - 828.} The basic difference between these three is that seriality and group is characterized by alterity and reciprocity respectively and institution is characterized by hierarchy of organizational structure. For Sartre all these are different stages in making of history. Each of these are correlated in the sense that there is a transition of individuals from series to group, group to series and group to institution; these cannot exist in isolation. A group may either disintegrate into series or it may further consolidate to form an institution (however by losing the essence of being a group).

Individuals in series are governed by practico-inert. For Sartre Practico-inert is matter in which past praxis is embodied. Group for Sartre is the outcome of human freedom. When an individual exercises his freedom at the same time he is also responsible for that conduct. He is at the same time responsible towards others and, others do the same to him. The act of considering each other's responsibility is an act of reciprocity. This lays the way for the foundation of group: It is better to discuss these ensembles briefly before going into the relationship.

For Sartre alterity is the characteristics of series. Series for him is a pseudo totalizing. It can be understood by the example of a bus stand where people are standing in Queue, to purchase tickets for the Bus. It is a case of complex exteriority, though it is an ensemble. Some are reading newspaper, some are
looking at the ceiling, and some are lost in thought. Every one is a stranger to
everyone. There is no mutual relationship. It is a mere assemblage of bodies, the
only thing common to them is the Bus. Sartre describes the following situation: a
plurality of isolated men finds themselves within a common practical field. The
Bus is an practico-inert. The Bus determines all of them to form an ensemble. The
relationship between individuals as determined by the practico-inert field is what
Sartre terms as relationship of alterity.

As R. D. Laing puts it “For an alteration occurs when my action passes
from my-action-for-me to my action-for-you. From being mine-for-me it becomes
other-for-the-other. The structural aspect of the transition to and fro from self-for-
self to other-for-other. Sartre calls alterity, and the movement he calls
alteration......Man acts on matter and totalized matter act on man, whether through
alteration, or objectification into materialized praxis, the resultant is always more
or less other than the intention. Yet man is only encountered as his objectification,
and in his alterations, as others for another.”12

Here we see that the meaning of the term objectification used in this
*Critique of Dialectical Reason* is the same as used in *Being and Nothingness*. If
one takes oneself as an object to be used by others, Sartre terms it as
objectification. Alteration and objectification are the most important characteristics
of a Series. In a Series one constantly negate other by his solitude and other at the

---

same time negate him by his solitude. The process of alterity and objectification are negative qualities as they are devoid of interiorization. There is a lack of praxis in it.

There is a bond of negation in Seriality. When people are standing in a Que., no one bothers about anyone. Each individual is busy in his own work. As R. D. Laing put it: “consider a group of persons waiting for a Bus.....They are a plurality of solitude. The solitude of each is not an inert necessity, but it is lived in the project of each as its negative structure: I have nothing to do with you....the other members of the queue, are all in their own worlds, and they live their present relationship with each other as members of the queue negatively, that take no quantitative series. They reciprocally deny any link between each of their inner world.”

This notion of negation as inherent in the very nature of seriality can be seen as parallel to internal negation as Sartre visualized in Being and Nothingness. The ideas of negation in seriality is the application of the ontological structures of negation as studied in the Being and Nothingness.

Sartre also gives an example of the relation of seriality in the indirect gathering. Sartre states, “housewives queuing in front of a bakers shop, in a period of shortage, are characterized as a gathering with a serial structure: and this

---

13. Ibid., p. 121-122.
gathering is direct: the possibility of a sudden unitary praxis (a riot) is immediately given. On the other hand, there can be practico-inert objects whose structure is completely determinate but which, within the indeterminate multiplicity of man (of a city, a nation or the world), themselves constitute a given plurality as an indirect gathering.\footnote{14}

He further gives the example of a radio broadcast whose political message is heard by a great number of listeners. One becomes aware and can analyze it also. In this way listeners indirectly communicate between each other. "Thus the practico-inert (radio, t.v, newspaper etc.) not only produces a unity of individuals outside themselves in inorganic matter, but also determines them in separation and, in so far as they are separate, ensure their communication through alterity (and the same apply to all mass media)."\footnote{15} Here the listener is merely a passive individual. He cannot organize and form group nor react on the interpretation broadcasted. He is not alone but others feels as if he is the only one around but every one remains as other. Here Sartre wants to show that there is no possibility of a genuine reciprocity without any concrete action. This is a situation of false reciprocity.

In the capitalist market, relationship is established through capital. It is on the capital as practico-inert that the whole economy of the nation rests. It is also through the maximum accumulation of the capital as basis that human relationship

\footnote{15} Ibid., p. 271.
is built. In fact, it is not a human relationship, but a struggle, deadly competition. Finally, 'I' return to "myself as other and my subjective fear of the other (whom I cannot reach) appears to me as alien force, the accelerated depreciation of money."16

Another most important kind of manifestation of collectives for Sartre is the 'public opinion'. Public opinion can go for or against the ruler. It also largely depends upon the rulers to interpret a particular fact as objective reality, and also an effective ideological materiality. If there is discontent, in Sartre's view in a particular social category, tension slowly develops. A fear does not come abruptly. Such tension and discontent develops largely through rumors. Sartre states "...So public opinion tends to be seen as a collective unification of the citizens into a nation, and imposing its representations on everyone as an integral part of the whole, just as the totality is present in each of its parts."17

It seems that Sartre is true in stating that rumors starts from a group of individual or a particular social category, but we find people take part in a serial propagation, which clearly illuminates its character as alterity. It is not genuine group behaviour.

As stated earlier, Sartre characterized group by reciprocity and mediation, he holds that it is really difficult to understand groups without studying series,
organizations and institutions. Fused group is formed through acts of reciprocal totalization. This is a case of real exercise of human freedom.

It always happens that people give up some of their individual freedom (constitutive praxis) for the sake of common freedom (constituted praxis). Here one may ask whether an individual is really losing his freedom and also if he still enjoys the central role he used to enjoy while creating his own totalization? For Sartre individuals retain their position even within the fused group. He gives the example of football team where each player is assigned a specific task of becoming a goalkeeper, a defender or a striker. Each of them being a member of the team must fulfill the minimum task assigned to him. One can take it as a role. Yet this role is not a stereotype that makes every goalkeeper of every team identical. Within the field of the task assigned to him the goalkeeper with his personal caliber can show that he is efficient goalkeeper and better then goalkeepers of other team. In his case he is not merely acting as a common individual of the group rather his specific individual character is also counted. So, Sartre terms a group as a quasi-totalization. It is quasi totalization because inspite of the individual ensemble, which forms it, Individual retain their specific individuality. So a group is never static. Sartre again sees a group not as totality but as a totalization. The notion of totality is a finished static product / goal. In individual who totalizes outside the totality can see it as a totality as a third person
mediating the reciprocity of the others, yet not being mediated by others is not possible. Through totalization one also get totalized. So a group is never a totality but a totalization. Group is characterized by common praxis and an individual by individual praxis. In the process of group formation and individual seems to loose some of his freedom.

But is it possible? Absolute freedom is not possible. The meaningfulness of freedom can be seen in the context of finite being that to in a spatio-temporal framework Sartre states “when I choose myself, I choose for the whole humanity”. By this statement it implies that my being in the world amidst others cannot be ignored. For Sartre individual does not loose his freedom through group fusion. Threats to the freedom of an individual can be perhaps discussed meaningfully in collectives or organizations and not in the fused group because fused is formed through mediated reciprocity and not through mediated alterity. Here Sartre talks of constituted praxis and constitutive praxis to represent group and individual praxis.

For Sartre praxis is embodied in matter. When man acts upon matter in his act of totalization, the act becomes praxis and matter becomes the practico-inert. Without the practico-inert the whole process of totalization is not possible. In any type of grouping social or political, one does not merely act with other. There is an involvement of third party either in a form of individual or multiplicity of
individual. Mark Poster interprets Sartre as "for the group the third was internal: for the series it was external. Each other member of the group was a third to the individual. Through his recognition by the third, and not by some group substance, the individual interiorized his group membership. The fundamental relation of the group-in-fusion was that of third to third, not of the individual to the group as a whole. The reciprocity of recognition-the common praxis by which each could see himself confirmed in the other-was a vital core of the group." 18

Sartre also gives the example of a road mender and a gardener who are working in the different sides of a wall. But he sees both of them and totalizes both of them in his totalization. Here he mediates the two who are completely exterior to one another.

There is often a common goal ahead in Sartre's view, ahead on the basis of which a group is formed. But there is always a possibility, of conflict arising within a group. Sartre states in this respect "there is procrastinators, oppositionists, orders, and counter orders, conflicts, temporary leaders who are quickly reabsorbed and replaced by other leaders. But the essential point remains, through this life of the fused group (which is in fact only its struggle against death through passivisation): namely, if the group is really to constitute itself by an effective praxis, it will eliminate procrastinators and oppositionists. This means the common freedom will create itself in everyone against them until in the end the orders

which circulate really are orders which everyone gives himself in himself and in all.”

Here it seems that a group is formed to discard any impotence and passivity. Sartre further states “intelligibility of the fused group depends, therefore, on the complex ensemble of a negative designation of its community, reactualised in the negation of this negation, that is, in the free constitution of individual praxis. At his level, there is group behaviour and group thoughts in that the common praxis is self eluding: and the essential structure of these practical thoughts is the unrevealing of the world as a new reality thoughts the negation of the old reality of impotence, i.e., through the negation of the impossibility of humanity.”

It is often seen that group is temporary in character. It disintegrates as soon as the goal is achieved. It may disintegrate before the goal is actually achieved. In order to stop this Sartre argues that each member of a fused group takes pledge not to break up. This gives a sense of solidarity among the members and also an image of solidarity of the group to the people outside the group. In this way each member has the fear that he may be treated as a traitor both by his fellowmen as well as the enemy if he breaks away from the group. Sartre tries to highlight the in-built terror in all pledged organization. Both the betrayal as well as fidelity depend on human praxis. He states “betrayal and desertion, brought about by fear and suffering, are, therefore, from this point of view, free praxis in that they are

20. Ibid., p. 405 .
organized behaviour in response to exterior threats. It is also clear that the fear of being afraid-for example, of letting the side down, of being the one through whom the group changes through panic into an inert mass-may be important for an inexperienced young combatant. He is afraid of this fear as an irresistible impulse and, at the same time, he rejects it as a free preference for his own safety over that of all. In this sense my pledge becomes my surety for myself in that it is me offering myself, in every third party, as everyone’s guarantees of not relapsing, in my person or thought, my conduct, into serial alterity.” 21 “Pledge therefore is a practical device.” 22 “It is also a mediated reciprocity.” 23 This is, it seems for keeping the group united.

This can be because it is not the individual alone who makes the pledge, but all the members of the group make a pledge that they will remain united at the most crucial and difficult time. Ones relation to the other is reciprocal and their reciprocity is mediated and totalized by a third member (practico-inert) of the group and so on. So it becomes imperative to form an organization, which is a form of organized praxis; otherwise one may land up in chaos and confusion governed by terror and fear. [For Sartre true dialectics come when individual praxis takes the central stage while totalizing himself and the world outside].

Fused group gives rise to pledged group and pledged group further gives rise to institution. Ones it is formed, there is a formation of hierarchy and division

21 Ibid., p. 422.
22 Ibid., p. 420.
23 Ibid., p. 419.
of function. Sartre states, "this untranscendable conflict between individual and
the common, which oppose and define each other and each of which returns into
the other as its profound truth, is naturally manifested in new contradictions are
expressed by a new transformation of the group; the organization is transformed
into a hierarchy, and pledge gives rise to institution." 24

So a group in order to sustain itself must turn into an institution. In a group
each individual is equal. Each individual freedom is respected. But in institution
individuals freedom is negated. He as an personification of individual freedom
becomes inessential. This is because of the emergence of power and functions.
This inessentiality of person is the out come of each persons impotence born of the
belief in the unalterable character of institutions. Sartre holds "but this
inessentiability does not come either from the institution: It is actually practiced in
isolating itself in so far as it is produced in a common milieu defined by new
human relationships. These relationships are based quite simply on serial
impotence: If I regard the institution as basically unalterable, this is because my
praxis in the institutionalized group determines itself as incapable of changing the
institution; and this impotence originates in my relation of circular alterity to the
other members of the group." 25

Here it is clear from the above passage that it is the individual freedom to
let his praxis in the institutionalized group and to be reduced to impotence. He has

24 Ibid., p. 518.
25 Ibid., p. 601.
the same freedom to come out of it. His becoming impotence is his own choice. Here Sartre retains the basic thrust that “man is freedom”.

Institution further as a praxis gives rise to a new form of seriality. But it still gets reinteriorised through the role of authority. Sartre in this respect states “the foundation of authority is in fact sovereignty, in so far as, after the stage of the fused group, it is the quasi-sovereignty of the regulatory third party. Thus the leader emerges at the same time as the group itself and produces the group which produces him, except that at this elementary moment of the investigation, the leader might be anyone.”26 Thus leader as a person becomes inessential in the case of authority.

Sartre further states that any form of institution can not be considered as a genuine form of group ensemble. “We can immediately see the true power of the group in the impotence of each of its members. This impotence endows functions with a material force of inertia, and turns them into hard, heavy organs, which are capable of striking, crushing, etc. Thus the true efficacity of the group, as a praxis bogged down in matter, lies in its materiality - that is, in its becoming - process. But in so far as praxis is process, goals lose their teleological character. Without ceasing to be genuine goals, they become destinies.”27 So here group, in the form of institution seems to be inevitable. When group becomes institution it looses its character. This has to be questioned.

26. Ibid., p. 607.
27. Ibid., p. 663.
So we have discussed Series, Group and Institution, they are not isolated and complete entities. They are interrelated and are different stages of human ensemble. They lead to the creation of history and are the different stages of history. Series give rise to group and group may disintegrate into series or consolidate itself to form an institution. Series may again directly lead to the formation of an institution. So it is not a unilinear process but a multilinear one. There is no temporal a-priority in the transition of one ensemble to another. But for Sartre there is a logical a-priori in this transition. He states "who can claim that collectives come before group? No one is in a position to advance any hypothesis in this subject; or rather-despite the data of pre history and ethnography, no such hypothesis has any meaning...our reason for positing the logical alteriority of collectives is simply that according to what history teaches us, groups constitute themselves as determination and negation of collectives......Collectives, on the other hand, even when they result from the disintegration of active groups, preserve nothing of themselves as collectives, except for dead, ossified structures which scarcely conceal the flight of seriality. Similarly, the group, whatever it may be, contains in itself its reasons for relapsing into the inert being of the gathering: thus the disintegration of a group, as we shall see, has an a priori intelligibility. But the collective as such and apart from the action of factors we are about to study--contains at most the mere possibility of a synthetic union of its members. Lastly, regardless of pre-history, the important here, in a history conditioned by class
struggle, is to explain the transition of oppressed classes from the state of being collectives to revolutionary group praxis. This is particularly important because such a transition has really occurred in each case.\textsuperscript{28}

Therefore from this passage it shows that there is a logical a-priori of collective giving rise to group.

Thus in all the stage of Series, Group and Institution, Individual remains as a subject. In both series and institution, individual as an individual praxis becomes inessential and this is not determined by any factor. He himself chooses to be inessential, this is because for Sartre the Individual always has the freedom to break away from either of the three.

Here we see that Sartre retains the same concept of freedom as he advocated in his earlier work i.e. \textit{Being and Nothingness}.

In the first volume of the \textit{Critique} Sartre treats the problem of dialectics and the relation of Marxism to existentialism. He begins by studying the "materialistic" dialectic of later generation of Marxists. He states that this dialectic is in fact "idealistic" as knowledge of it is beyond the scope of any individual investigator. It would be what he calls an "exterior" dialectic, existing in nature and in man only insofar as he is a part of nature. In principle, consciousness would be unable to understand fully its structures. This, in turn, would mean that history,

\footnote{\textsuperscript{28} Ibid., p. 348 - 349.}
in the final analysis, is unknowable.

Sartre agrees that a dialectic of nature exists but adds that at the present moment in history its structures can only be hypothesized. Hazel. E. Barnes while stating Sartre as materialist says. "He Chooses ‘therefore, to study the dialectic where he finds it : in the context of human reality. In place of a materialist dialectic he offers a “realist” dialectic which operates between two sectors of materiality : Praxis and things." 29

Sartre defines praxis as “the activity of and individual or group in organizing conditions in the light of some end." 30 This definition of Sartre assumes that man is free, and his recognition is through action. Any activity associated with certain goals or objectives is considered an intentionally implies responsibility. Praxis is possible through the act of totalization.

Sartre defines the dialectic in terms of a totalization. While a totality can exist only as a correlative of an margining consciousness, a totalization is action in development. Totalization for Sartre is the constantly developing process of understanding and making history." 31 He states that from an ontological point of view, the dialectic is a totalization, while in terms of epistemology, it is the accessibility of totalization to a knowledge which is itself totalizing. Dialectical reason might thus be described as a “reflexive retotalization”. We may point out

31. Ibid., p. 830.
that Sartre brings in the subjective aspect of his method of totalization when he interprets “reflective-retotalization”. Here the central role is played by the epistemic subject who synthesizes reality through ‘regressive progressive’ conscious activity. Sartre contrasts dialectical reason with analytical reason and place the problem of rationalists in its historical context. It is his contention that analytical reason breaks a whole into part while dialectical reason provides for a synthesis of parts into a whole. Analytical reason, (therefore, is a moment of dialectical reason).

In contrast to the Being and Nothingness, the Critique presents man in terms not only of desire but of need. Sartre states the nature of need. Man has the capacity to go beyond a situation. “This going beyond we find at the very root of the human - in need”32 “Everything is to be explained through need; need is the first totalizing relation between the material being, man and the material ensemble of which he is a part, this relation is univocal and of interiority.”33 Indeed, it is through need that the first negation of the negation and the first totalization appear in matter. Need is a negation of the negation in so far as it expresses itself as a lack within the organism; the need is a positivety in so far as the organic totality tends to preserve itself as such through it.”34 Need is a positive quality and need is always need of something (matter). The man of need is simultaneously a man of labour. Sartre states that need is praxis and that human labour is “the original

34. Ibid., p. 08.
praxis by which man produces and reproduces life." 35 While in *Being and Nothingness* consciousness discovered itself in and through the object of which it is conscious, while in the *Critique* need discovers itself in and through the object on which it labours. In labour, more over, man makes himself into a tool in order to satisfy himself as need. There is, then a kind of reification of man, which precedes any contact with others.

In *Being and Nothingness* the appearance of the other is man’s down fall, through the presence of the other, man discovers the great law of the world to which all are subject: Scarcity. Scarcity manifests itself to men of need labouring in the same practical field. R. D. Laing puts it as “whether the relation is man to man, or man to matter the fundamental relation in our history is the reciprocal need - scarcity. It is the contingent determination of our univocal relation of materiality. Scarcity in the material world is constituted by need. This dialectic can also be viewed starting from scarcity, not from need." 36

Scarcity may be a theoretical basis for both totalization and praxis. Lack is also “seen as a totality and what is lacking can be reduced to inorganic or less organized elements.” 37 A particular lack can be overcomed when a need (for the lack) is fulfilled. Need is opposed to lack. Lack is a negation, need is a negation of negation. Sartre terms lack, which is for Marx scarcity. Need is the substratum

35 Ibid., p. 90.
upon which praxis takes place as an act of internalization leading to the encounter between man (conscious matter) and his environment (inert matter). For Sartre “praxis is a passage from objective to objective through internalization. Matter can only act on matter but act can be performed only by a conscious matter who can internalize.”

38 So “need is already totalizing, and gives a total field of possibility of satisfaction.”

39 Thus there is a possibility of satisfaction but no permanent satisfaction. There is a chain of need hence one is displaced by other.

Sartre accepts that it is because of Scarcity that there is violence “The origin of struggle always lies, in fact, in some concrete antagonism whose material condition is Scarcity, in a particular form, and the real aim in objective conquest or even creation, in relation to which the destruction of the adversary is the only means.”

40

In his analysis of Scarcity Sartre states, “The whole human adventure at least until today in a fierce struggle against scarcity. Thus, at all levels of worked and socialized matter we find again at the base of each of its passive actions the original structure of Scarcity as fist unity coming to matter from men and returning to men through matter....Scarcity is fundamental human relation (with nature and with men).”

41 According to Sartre Scarcity exists as a long-standing and virtually irremediable relationship of humans to nature. It is only a contingent and specific

---

39 Ibid., p. 97.
40 Ibid., p. 123 - 125.
41 Ibid., p. 123 - 125.
instance of the basic human relationship with nature but it is contingent in a special sense, since scarcity leads to our particular history and makes us a specific kind of people. Where Scarcity overcomes, our labour would still result in counter-finality, a passive activity of worked matter reacting against its workers.

As he said that violence is due to Scarcity, Scarcity is a central fact of human history, very simply there is not enough for every body. To a person living among others this fact means that "the consumption of a certain product elsewhere, by others, deprives him here of an opportunity of getting and consuming something of the same kind." Where there is not enough food there are too many people. Under condition of Scarcity, each person is the inhuman man for all the others. In Sartre's view humanity does not arise from any human nature; it is interiorized scarcity.

Scarcity need not even be directly involved for the other to become a terrifying enemy "It is undeniable that what I attack is man as man, that is, as the free praxis of an organic being. It is man, and nothing else, that I hate is the enemy, that is, in myself as other, and it is myself that I try to destroy in him, so as to prevent him destroying me in my own body." For Scarcity to have its terrible effect direct violence need not be necessary. "It merely means that the relations of production are established and pursued in a climate of fear and mutual mistrust by individuals who are always ready to believe that the other is an antihuman or an

---

42 Ibid., p. 128.
43 Ibid., p. 133.
We may point out two aspects of Sartre’s Philosophy in this context, firstly where as in Being and Nothingness Sartre position in various passages is contradictory with regard to the non existence of material world, or nature, taken to be independent of the conscious subject, In the Critique we find that his position with regard to the existence of objective material world or nature is very clearly accepted as an important constituent of his ontology. The other point which we want to make here is, as opposed to Sartre’s view, Marx’s position is that, the human history depends upon Scarcity in nature in relation to the needs of man, and on the other hand the impetus of history lies in the development of the productive forces, the appropriation of the surplus value by other propertied class, and the class struggle.

Both Sartre and Marx believe that there will one-day be an end to the problem of scarcity. Sartre sees Marxism as a philosophy of scarcity. He writes “As soon as there will exist ‘for everyone’ a margin of ‘real’ freedom beyond the production of life. Marxism will have lived out its span; a philosophy of freedom will take its place. But we have no means, no intellectual instrument, no concrete experience which allows us to conceive of this freedom or of this philosophy.”

Here in the last sentence Sartre seems to express doubts about the philosophy of freedom being realized in actual life. Despite these doubts, one can see that Sartre’s inclination towards Marxism and claiming Existentialism as an ideology
of Marxism compelled him to visualize a society where scarcity would have ended and freedom of man be made possible. Since Sartre thought that freedom can only be concretized after sorting the problem of material inequality between human being, he formulated the idea of a ‘philosophy of freedom’ as the next step from Marxism (philosophy of scarcity).

Sartre while determining the importance of Man as the foundation of Existential Marxism state “within this living universe, man occupies, for us, a ‘privileged’ place. First because he is able to be historical, that is, he can continuously define himself by his own praxis by means of changes suffered or provoked and their internalization, and then by the very surpassing of the internalized relations. Second, because he is characterized as the existent, which we are. In this case the questioner finds himself to be precisely the questioned, or, if you prefer, human reality is the existent whose being is in question in its being. It is evident that this “being-in-question” must be taken as a determination of praxis and that the theoretical questioning comes in only as an abstract moment of the total process.”

According to Sartre ‘Man’ should be taken as privileged “Man should not be defined by historicity - Since there are some societies without history-but by the permanent possibility of living historically the breakdowns which sometimes overthrow societies of repetition. The definition is necessarily a posterior, that is, it

---

arises at the heart of a historical society, and it is in itself the result of social
transformation. But it goes back to apply itself to societies without history in the
same way that history itself returns to them to transform them—first externally and
then in and through the internalization of the external.\textsuperscript{47}

For Sartre historical praxis is the lived experience of man as an
existential agent. It is known only indirectly through ‘rational nonknowledge’
incomprehension or understanding, in contrast to causal explanation.

Sartre in his \textit{Search for a Method} States that “Plurality of the meaning of
history can be discovered and posited for itself only upon the ground of a future
totalization— in terms of the future totalization and in contradiction with it. It is our
theoretical and practical duty to bring this totalization closer every day. All is still
obscure, and yet every thing is in full light. To tackle the theoretical aspect, we
have the instruments; we can establish the method. Our historical task, at the heart
of the polyvalent world, is to bring closer the moment when history will have only
one meaning, when it will tend to be dissolved in the concrete men who will make
it in common...without living men, there is no history. The object of
existentialism...is the individual, alienated, reified, mystified, as he has been made
to be by the division of labour and by exploitation, but struggling against alienation
with the help of distorting instruments and despite every thing, patently ground.”\textsuperscript{48}

\textsuperscript{47} Ibid., p. 167.
It is in the *Critique* that Sartre comes to define matter in terms of the Practico-inert. He argues that man never knows pure matter. “If he could encounter pure matter in experience, he would have to be either a god or a stone.”49 Matter in fact always appears as worked matter. The practico inert is thus what Sartre calls an “immaterial matter”. In his view it can be defined specially as things insofar as they are mediated by man and man insofar as he is mediated by things. Sartre states, “At any moment of History things are human precisely to the extent that men are things.”50 If the practico-inert exists, however, it is because of man. “Man is precisely the material reality from which matter gets its human functions.”51 It is praxis, then when inscribed in things, that turns back against praxis and reifies it. A ‘new being’ is created by a type of worked matter, which was originally created by human struggling against Scarcity. Human praxis is a genuine form of human activity because there is an element of reciprocity involved in it. Had praxis been an act of man to man in alterity, it could not be considered a genuine form of human relationship. As R. D. Laing puts “in reciprocity, each may make himself a vehicle of one’s own. Then there will be two separate transcendent ends and the reciprocity will have the character of an exchange, or each makes himself the means of the other for one joint end, which will be unique and transcendent. I recognize the other, both as the means towards a transcendent end of my own, and as a generator of a project for which I am a

50. Ibid., p. 182.
51. Ibid., p. 180.
means. This is, I see him as an agent of a totalization in his movement towards his ends in the same movement as that, whereby I project myself towards my own, and I discovered myself to be object and instrument for his ends by the same act whereby I constitute him as object and instrument for my ends. In reciprocity thus each respects the others praxis and this reciprocity for Sartre is possible between two free individual. The Practico-inert is “the domination of man by worked ‘matter’ in such a way that man becomes a product of his product.”

For Sartre praxis is possible only when men act as matter. Practico-inert is “matter in which past praxis is imbodied.” It is an embodiment of the past praxis because it is the product of human praxis. Any material object cannot be practico-inert. It is a human creation, an outcome of human mediation. Sartre has a wide spread conception of the practico-inert. Any part of nature on which a human being has worked can be considered as practico-inert. Practico-inert is an outcome of dialectic because the very concept of practico-inert is dialectical in nature. Dialectics is “not a truth, not even a conjecture, but is the type of thought which is necessary, prospectively in order to elucidate a self developing investigation.”

A clear example of Practico-inert being is language. While in Being and Nothingness Sartre grounds language in being - for-others, in the Critique he

---

52. Laing, D. R & Cooper, D. G., Reason and violence, Tavistock Publication. 1971. p. 08.
54. Ibid., p. 829.
55. Ibid., p. 79.
grounds language in matter. “Words”, he states, “are matter, which has been mediated by man. They carry the project of the other into me and my projects into the other.”

He continues: “words live off the death of man, they come together through men; whenever I form a sentence its meaning escape from me, is stolen from me; meaning are changed for every one by each speaker and each day; the meanings of the very words in my mouth are changed by others.”

Language is thus an immaterial matter through which praxis experiences both unity and alterity. The above account show’s very clearly the affinity of Sartre views in the Critique with those of Being and Nothingness. The basic existentialist presupposition which he takes for granted from Descartes, that man some how exists in abstraction as pure consciousness, his interaction with other human being, his language and even his physiological being is taken to be, as some thing alien to his real Being, is what he in Being and Nothingness regards as “Nothing”. It is this form of existentialist individuals, which Sartre attempts to reconcile with Marxism in the Critique. We may here point out that, when we compare Sartre’s concept of consciousness with Marxism we find that though the expression ‘consciousness’ is used by both the thinkers, yet the content of that consciousness in the two positions (Sartre and Marx) are completely opposed to one another. For Marx, for instance, consciousness is always social consciousness, which develops through the interaction between man and nature and man and man. Thus Marxism holds that the concept of consciousness is a dynamic one and language,

56. Ibid., p. 98.
57. Ibid., p. 98.
cognition, imagination, willing etc. are not aspects of consciousness but are its real components.

Coming to Sartre it is in terms of the practico-inert that Sartre describes the inertia of praxis. Praxis is inert when the praxis that has been inscribed in things work through it. This is the meaning of passivity. It is a structure that profoundly alters the course of human history.

Man is born into a world of humanized matter and discovers at a certain age a future prescribed for him in things. In the case of the worker, determinism is to be found in the machine. The Machine is a worked object, which contains the past praxis of the capitalist. Through it, the worker is made into a thing. It is in this context that Sartre is able to arrive at a definition of class being. Sartre has graphically rendered the process of the practico-inert in turn becoming “axis” and dictating its terms upon man. Sartre gives the example of periodically recurring floods in the vicinity of China’s great river, as a result of the continual clearing operations by Chinese farmers. The floods are the unintended result of the activities directed towards urinning back the land. Here the effort to humanize nature sometimes leads to disastrous catastrophes. Another example of practico-inert turning axis is the present state of fast advancing industrialization. Man invents an alternative world of technology. But technology in turn enslaves man as he finds himself handicapped without the practico-inert. This enslavement of man
to matter which manifests in the form of need is termed by Sartre as ‘unjustified need’ of consumerism.

Every year large number of factories are closing down because of the unavailability of raw materials or due to unavailability of new markets. Thousands of workers are rendered unemployed when an industry is closed. This is the ugly side of capitalist economy. This mode of production in capitalist economy brings more alienation to the workers where workers are enslaved by the practico-inert. Thus practico-inert is constantly dictating a particular kind of lifestyle on the people. Sartre writes “every praxis is primarily an instrumentalisation of material reality. It envelops the inanimate thing in a totalizing project, which gives it a pseudo-organic unity. By this I mean that this unity is indeed that of a whole, but it remains social and human; in itself it does not achieve the structure of exteriority which constitutes the molecular world. However if the unity persists it does so through material inertia. But this unity is nothing other than the passive reflection of praxis, that is to say, of a human enterprise undertaken in particular circumstances, with well defined tools and in a historical society at a certain point in its development.”58 As we have discussed that man acts on matter as much as matter acts on man. But matter cannot directly act on man. It is through other man that matter acts on man.

While describing worked matter as alienated objectivation of individual

58. Ibid., p. 161.
and collective praxis Sartre writes, “Should we describe this as alienation? Obviously we should in that he returns to himself as other. However, a distinction must be made; Alienation in Marxist sense begins with exploitation. Should we go back to Hegel who sees alienation as a constant characteristic of all kinds of objectification? Yes and No. We must realize that original relation and materiality as passivity obliques man to objectify himself, in a milieu which is not his own, and to treat an inorganic totality as his own objective reality. It is this relation between interiority and exteriority which originally constituted praxis as a relation of the organism to its material environment; and there can be no doubt that as soon as man begins to designate himself not as the mere reproduction of his life, but as the ensemble of products which reproduce his life, he discovers himself as other in the world of objectivity. Totalized matter, as inert objectification perpetuated by inertia is in effect non-human or even anti-human.”

Here we are reminded of Marx’s saying that man through his labour humanizes nature. The contrast, which shows forth between Sartre’s and Marx’s conception of the act and result of objectification (Labour), originates from his adherence to Hegel’s idealism. Marx’s criticism of Hegel’s concept of nature as something defective applies to Sartre also. Marx holds that if man is a natural being then his freedom can be realized in nature itself, in realizing the necessity and not by nihilating nature.

59. Ibid., p. 227.
According to Sartre “Class being as practico inert being mediated by a passive synthesis of worked matter, comes to men through men; for each of us, it is our being -outside-ourselves in matter and, in so far as it constitutes itself through us as a future-fatality, that is to say as a future which will necessarily realize itself through us, or through arbitrary actions which we choose.”  

Class, being is characterized by ‘interest’ and destiny. Both refer to a certain relationship between man and thing in a social field. The thing is man’s interest if in this relationship he is an active subject; it is his destiny if he is a passive subject. The machine is thus the capitalist’s interest and the workers destiny.

When individuals recognize their common interest/destiny, they achieve a kind of identity. This identity, however is alienating since through it each is the same as the other to the extent, that he is other than himself. It represents a unity in alterity, which Sartre calls “Seriality”. In Seriality “the other is me in every other and every other in me and every one as other in all the others.”  

Sartre employs the terms ‘series’ and ‘collective’ to speak of the role played by the complex relationship between man and things in his history of alienation.

Serialized man is the object of what Sartre, based on his reading of American Sociology, calls, ‘other direction’. Man is ‘other directed’ when a

---

60. Ibid., p. 238 - 239.
61. Ibid., p. 266 - 267.
special interest group manipulates his serial relations in order to achieve certain ends. Other directed man acts as every other man in the hope of being the same. In the process, however, he destroys any possibility of direct reciprocity with the other.

In Sartre’s thought “alienation is situated in the context of a social philosophy that takes a transcendental - Philosophical Orientation.” He further states “at stake is the demonstration of principles through which understanding can discover its justification in the domain of the social. These principles should be grasped by ascertaining these principle-concepts, and by demonstrating their range and meaning.” Sartre begins with the logical structures of Marx’s theory of alienation in his determination of the concept of alienation. The determination of the concept is supposed to result in drawing out the full theoretical consequences of what was restricted to a historical-concrete object of Marx’s theory.

Sartre’s discussions of Seriality proceed from the fact that many individuals find themselves in a system of Practico-inert relation. “He joins the view point of objectification and depersonalization with that of “massification” by the Practico-inert.” Massification signifies that the individual stands in a relationship in which he as a person, is inessential. Sartre is thinking here of the fact that a great number of concrete complexes, such as factories, streets, shops, and train stations, exist

---

without reference to individuality. Here the individual is in Sartre’s interpretation, “any one”. He appears as the “whoever”, nameless in the midst of a multitude of men. The generality that is determined by matter and then ascribed to the individual is decisive here for Sartre. We may state here that in such a society for Marx individuals are turned into what Marx calls ‘commodities’.

For Sartre Massification not only means the reduction of the individual to the generality of practico-inert given, but it also includes the ‘isolation’ of individual from one another; the intensity of isolation is understood as a measure of the massification of the society’s entire complex.65

In this context Sartre’s and Marx’s concept of alienation in an industrialized society with a very high, degree of division of labour are very similar. Direct reciprocity between men is possible only when they attempt to negate their serial relations. What Sartre calls the “group-in-fusion” represents the moment when men are no longer unified in alterity but in their joint effort to transcend alterity. Such a group forms in a moment of common danger and marks the beginning of revolution.

Sartre gives two choices of the relation between the self and the other. According to Sartre man was primarily himself or he was other than himself. For Sartre any philosophy, which subordinates the human to what was other than man,

65 Ibid., p. 257.
whether it be existentialist idealism or Marxist idealism, was to have hatred of
man as its basis and its consequence. According to Sartre, the definition of man as
other than himself was making man a victim and accomplice of concrete
alienation. Sartre writes “alienation presupposes that man is primarily action. Its
attitude is based on freedom: the human relation of exteriority is based on the
direct bond of interiority as the basic type of human relation.” Sartre poses that
alienation consists in man’s creating a reality in his product that does not
correspond to the intention of his activity. This aspect of alienation is also found in
Marx, who emphasizes that to the alienated and exploited worker his labour seems
“as an activity turned against him, as independent of him, as not belonging to
him.” Sartre’s novelty does not consist in his definition of the meaning of
alienation, but rather in the type of explanation he offers. In Marx’s thought, the
phenomenon of alienation always appears in connection with the capitalist
economy and the history of the division of labour. Sartre consciously advances
beyond this context to the anthropological structural state of affairs, with the
intention of generalizing Marx’s concept of alienation.

For Sartre the criterion of alienation is clearly not - as it is for Marx - a
deterioration in the concept of the essence of true mutuality. The moment of
strangeness is in the failure of aims and results to correspond to one another. The
Sartrian conception of alienation is clearly oriented towards a standard of freedom

---

66. Ibid., p. 181.
67. Marx, Karl., The Economic and Philosophic Manuscript of 1844, Trans., Martin Milligan (New
that accounts for a situation whose organization does not hinder it from realizing what it has proposed for itself.

Sartre gives primacy to subject over object, both in *Being and Nothingness* and in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, and interprets Marx differently in the two text. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre accuses Marx of proposing a theory of 'seriousness' by making man subordinate to the object of thing. But in Search for a Method Sartre interprets Marx as giving primacy to the subject, as the object was only a condition of man’s being. Sartre use to think, if man is bind by the situation how can he at once go beyond the situation? Sartre here use to charge Marx that, when he based superstructure theory that man is determined to the extent of disappearance. Sartre thus has proposed an alternative to Marxian determinism in his theory of situation where man is assumed as originally free, because only free man can be possibly alienated or changed. There was a dialectic in operation for Sartre, within the realm of reciprocity. According to Sartre a human being by nature expects from the other human being a human relation. This according to Sartre, led human being to realize the shameness of their existence to form a fused group in fusion as an effect of positive reciprocity and a negation of reciprocity as mere shameness.

Sartre recognizes the fundamentallity of the Marxist conception of alienation as inalienable. Sartre realizes that, if alienation is inalienable, then the praxis and the project would lose all meaning as human endavours. For Sartre
alienation was inalienable, not on the ground of his own theory but on the ground
of Marxian theory. Sartre’s interpretation in this regard had two assumption about
Marxian position.

(i) inalienability of alienation was pre-supposed by the inalienability of the
identity between ‘alterity’ objectification and alienation and,

(ii) elimination of alienation was not of necessity implied by the
elimination of the capitalist production.

Sartre assuming the second proposition to be his position argued that in a
metaphysical sense, alienation was inalienable. For Marx with the end of capitalist
production, alienation is inalienable. Sartre in Critique is concerned with the
concrete relation of man with matter and among themselves. Sartre agrees with
Marx concept of exploitation, but differs with the later view that exploitation is the
basis of alienation. For Sartre exploitation is a form of alienation but not a basis of
alienation. Sartre argued that alienation could be located in worked matter and
multiplicity or social alterity. Unlike Sartre, Marx confirmed the identity between
objectification and alienation when he writes: “the worker becomes all the poorer,
the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and size.
The worker becomes an ever-cheaper commodity the more commodity he creates.
The devaluation of the world of men is in direct production to the increasing value
of the world of things. Labour produces not only commodities: it produces itself
and the worker as a commodity, and this at the same rate at which it produces
commodity in general. This fact expresses merely, that the object, which labours
produces-labour's product-components as something alien as a power independent
of the producer. The worker-the product of labour is labour which has been
embodied in an object, which has become material: it is the objectification of the
labour. Labours realization is its objectification. Under these economic conditions
this realization of labour appears as a loss of object and bondage to it;
appropriation as estrangement, as alienation."

As Marx attributes exploitation to be the source of alienation, the
elimination of alienation is linked, in Marx, to the elimination of exploitative
system. For Sartre alienation [alterity] and objectification [de-alienated reciprocity]
were separate, but historical. We have seen in the statement by Marx how he
identifies creation of wealth [appropriated wealth by few] and creation of poverty
[workers as producers devalued by capitalist economy] as caught in the one and
the same process. In Marx objectification and alienation is dialectically identified
as the identity is brought about by two opposing classes[the proletariat and the
capitalist]. For Sartre, unlike Marx, the notion of class was not functional as it
would presuppose man as ontologically a hating being and in turn a hateful being.
Thus Sartre's enthusiasm to make existentialism one with Marxism forced him to

---

remain with his earlier existential position that alienation was inalienable. Sartre however, did attempt to make alienation alienable with his concepts of de-alienated reciprocity, fused-group, spontaneity [all against the Marxian notion of party] but without any success. Sartre’s thesis of practico-inert, scarcity, need, worked matter overshadowed his attempt towards the inalienability of alienation.

The group - in - fusion is not an object but rather the common structure of each individual action. It is in a sense a collective praxis. In this group “my” fellow - man is no longer other than “me” but the same. He is the lived objectivity of “my” subjectivity. Though the group - in - fusion makes possible a positive reciprocity among men, it nevertheless arises in a world of Scarcity where human relations remain antagonistic. In order to survive, it must struggle with opposing groups, which aim to destroy it. In the process it takes on the practico - inert structure it hoped to dissolve. It becomes an institution and its leader a sovereign. Because of Scarcity, revolution thus fails. Man is condemned to alienation, and only in an ever distant future will he be able to realize his project of freedom.

The group, according to Sartre, is the beginning of humanity where men recovers his lost being, his supposed freedom. Sartre thinks that the recovery of freedom is possible in a group structure. The group - in - fusion may be the beginning of humanity, but it is nothing than ‘a island of humanity in a sea of inert series’, and it is always threatened by the fear of dispersion. Each member has to
take as oath of allegiance to the group. There is also the threat of the freedom of
the individual, as the individual could always withdraw from the group. The group
-in - fusion can also release a regime of terror to suppress its possible destruction.
The only threat for the existence of group comes from Scarcity which is nothing
but a historical condition. Sartre then goes on to show how different collectives are
formed, but in each case there is a possibility of each of them developing into a
rigid institution. The member of the group - in - fusion, to work as pioneers of a
movement, have to make efforts all the time to preserve the spontaneity and the
organic character of each of the collective unity. According to Sartre despite such
oppressive determinism, man remains the maker of history. This is because man in
his being in free. There is thus a truth of history, which might be called the truth of
freedom. It is a “truth in becoming”. In Critique Sartre claims that it simply
articulates this truth to itself and brings it to the level of reflexivity. For Sartre
history is the outcome of human praxis. History is human history. It is man who
makes history. Sartre’s understanding of history hardly helps him to understand
nature. Only that part which is concerned with human praxis is known. Sartre
accepts the Marxian principle that ‘...man themselves make their history but in a
given environment which conditions them.’ Sartre is against the orthodox Marxist
who believes that man is a “... passive product of a sum of conditioned
reflexes.”

For Sartre, in spite of socio-economic and cultural environment surrounding man, he has always the freedom to say no and change the environment. This does not deny the fact that he is born, lives and influenced by a particular environment. We see that here he still holds the same earlier position of the idea of freedom, i.e. freedom to say No as in Being and Nothingness. Furthermore, the individual still retains the same degree of freedom in Critique. He can say no to anything and everything even to the extent that he can die rather than accepting the society, which he hates. He gives the example of a black air-force official who had stolen the airplane as a revolt against the white colonial regime. In this situation there can be two consequences, either he lands up in the prison or accepts the death by plane crash. This is an extreme form of revolt, he is concerned with his individual destiny. Sartre in this respect states “.... this death express at the same time the impossible revolt of his people, hence his actual relation with the colonizers, the radical totality of his hate and refusal, and finally the inward project of this man - his choice of belief, dozing freedom, of a freedom to die.”

Here it can be asked whether freedom to die can be called a freedom at all because Sartre himself holds death as the impossibility of all possibility. Sartre advocated the concept of absolute freedom in Being and Nothingness. But in Critique he has illustrated the importance of social setup. He later realizes that a

---

70. Ibid., p. 169.
person leading a dehumanized life perhaps cannot visualize the true idea of freedom. He later states that the quality of being a man does not exist as such: this particular gardener recognizes in this particular road mender a concrete project, which is expressed in his behaviour of which others have already recognized by the very task which they have set him. Thus every one recognizes the other in the basis of a social recognition to which his clothes, his tools etc.; passively bears witness.

Therefore for Sartre man does not posses any essence, what he is known is through his activities and role in the society.

Thus we see that a structural historical anthropology according be Sartre demands to know the Being of human reality. However there is no way out to determine ‘Human Essence’ or ‘Human Nature’. What can be done in spite of this limitation is that we can know man’s way of relating himself to the world. By asserting the specificity of human existence and, at the same time, taking the concrete man in his objective reality, Marx has fulfilled this task. The main question that arises in this context is the question concerning man’s freedom and his individuality. Marx sees the dialectical relationship between man and his society, and for him just as society is a product of man, in exactly the same way man is the product of society. The individual, the real man is a person and is also characterized by a particular trait. These traits however in a class divided society,
are determined somehow by his class character.

Sartre separates man from his socio-historical condition i.e. from all his relations and also from his past and future. And Marx on the other hand conceives man as a socio-historical being who develops himself, becomes himself, through his own creative activity. The entire issue of nature of man and the nature of alienation is connected with the nature of consciousness.

We may state here that (Sartre’s) existential Marxism has tried to synthesize Marx’s concept of man as a social being and the concept of being, more forcefully and coherently that has never been before in the traditions of social thought. Hazel E Barnes in her introduction to Search for a Method says “we can readily detect the broad Marxist concepts, which he has adopted.” There is first of all the idea that the modern men live in past and present societies is directly determined by the mode and relation of production and the socio-economic structures which have been built upon them.

Sartre has been criticized by many Marxists who hold that Sartre in his assertion of absolute freedom has neglected the truth of the theory of evolution. They argue that man has reached consciousness through the modifications of his brain.

We may argue that, about human relations that Sartre has given a very
pessimistic picture. He thinks that all human relations are based on conflict and man is first an object to the other human being. Man wants to conquer his own subjectivity by making the other his object. This viewpoint which he first propounded in *Being and Nothingness* seems to be the foundation of man and society in the *Critique* as well. In the *Critique* he maintains that the individualistic concept of man seems to be uncurrent. This endless struggle continues and man can never establish relations of love and friendliness with other. His individualistic idea are too deep in his mind to give him the idea of a world, where all men will have freedom, equality, and social well being. Many Philosophers think that there is a contradiction in Sartre’s philosophy. Sartre is very much concerned about the welfare of the individual, but at the same time he feels that individual man can not establish his progress and welfare without those of the society. But Sartre at the same time regards alienation and conflict as the basis of human relationship. Thus one fails to regard, man who is always in conflict with others, can achieve a society where there is the equality and happiness for all.